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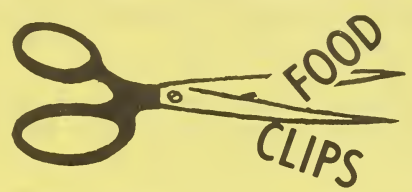


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# Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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Try raw vegetables for those snacks, suggest U.S. Department of Agriculture home economists. Have a good supply of celery sticks, carrot sticks, radishes, or green pepper slices ready in the refrigerator to eat when "hunger strikes."

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Mature dry legumes -- dry peas and members of the bean family including navy, pinto, and soybeans -- are outstanding among the vegetables for the protein they contain.

\* \* \*

Remember, most dark-green and deep-yellow vegetables excel as dependable and inexpensive sources of vitamin A.

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For a spring cookout, try barbecued whole turkey. The big bird rotating on the backyard rotisserie is an attractive conversation piece that turns into a real taste treat for your whole family.

## USDA's WILDERNESS

—and a celebration

Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz will speak at the 50th Anniversary celebration of the natural resource called "Wilderness" located in the Gila National Forest, southwestern New Mexico. It was on June 3, 1924 that the Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture first set apart this 750,000 acres known to be the first virtually untouched National Forest Land.

Today, as in 1924, that part of New Mexico is sparsely populated and serene. From the air, the forested mountains form a large splotch of darkness surrounded by pinyon and juniper-speckled rangeland. Between 4,800 and 11,000 foot elevation ranges, vegetation varies from sprawling cactus to spring fir. It's a rugged land of sheer-walled canyons, towering rock pillars, and vast areas of ponderosa pine broken occasionally by open parks---it's "wilderness."

### FOOD PRESERVATION SERIES III

Since 1925 some 700 deaths in the United States were traced to botulism poisoning caused by improper home canning. Improperly canned foods can lead to loss of your time, labor and money, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture home economists and researchers.

Organisms that cause food spoilage -- molds, yeasts, and bacteria -- are always present in the air, water and soil. Enzymes that may cause undesirable changes in flavor, color, and textures are present in raw fruits and vegetables. When food is heated hot enough and long enough, spoilage organisms are destroyed and the action of enzymes is destroyed.

#### --- The "How-to" in home canning

Successful home canning relies on sterilization and the exclusion of air. Both are accomplished by heat which destroys molds, yeasts and bacteria that cause spoilage. Heat also stops the action of enzymes that may cause undesirable changes in flavor, color, and texture of fruits and vegetables. Heat drives air out of the contents and seals the containers completely from outside contamination during storage.

Recommended canning equipment (including accurate pressure gauges), instructions, and recipes should be used to prepare home canned foods. And, firm fresh foods should be used.

#### --- On equipment needed

Canning equipment can be expensive. The initial investment for canners and jars is fairly high, but, you can compare prices on canners and supplies and buy them out-of-season. Before undertaking a full-scale home canning program--consult your local county extension home economist. She can provide you with up to date information on what, and how much to can, recommended procedures, and help on choosing and using everything you'll need.

It is important to choose the right canner for each food. For fruits, tomatoes, and pickled vegetables, you will need a boiling water bath canner. The natural acid in these foods make them safe when heated at the temperature of boiling water for the time period recommended for the specific food. A big metal container may be used if it is deep enough so that water is well over the tops of the jars (1-2") and has space to boil freely -- two to four inches. The canner must have a tight-fitting lid and a rack in the bottom.



## — on home canning

Low acid foods (meats, fish and common vegetables) require a temperature higher than boiling water for safe processing. You need to follow your instruction manual, or USDA publications, closely to make sure you are canning in a safe manner.

A pressure saucepan can be used for canning if it has a gauge that will maintain 10 pounds of pressure; if it is tall enough so that steam can circulate around and over jars; and if you add 20 minutes to the processing times recommended for each vegetable.

Open-kettle canning is not recommended for fruits and vegetables. In open-kettle canning, food is cooked in an ordinary kettle, then packed into hot jars without processing. The temperatures obtained are not high enough to destroy all the spoilage organisms that may be in the food. Spoilage bacteria may get in when the food is transferred from kettle to jar.

A pressure canner (cooker) may be used for processing fruits and tomatoes--if it is deep enough, it may be used as a water-bath canner. There should be one or two inches of water over tops of containers (jars).

Use jars and lids manufactured specifically for use in home canning because they are designed to give a correct seal and have the strength to withstand temperature and pressure during processing and cooling. A shortage of glass jars existed in the market last summer because of soda ash, a basic material in the manufacture of glass. Glass jars are expected to be relatively tight in supply through 1975. However, don't use baby food jars, mayonnaise jars, very old canning jars or jars with nicks, dents, cracks or rust. Use clean new rings for one piece lid type and new metal lids with sealing compound for the two piece lid.

Test the seal of porcelain-lined caps by turning each jar partly in your hands. Test the seal of flat metal lid by pressing center of lid down. If lid is firmly down and will not move, jar is sealed. A clear ringing sound when tapped with a spoon means a good seal.

Half gallon size jars? USDA does not recommend this size jar because it is difficult to reach the recommended temperature in the center of the jar. Food tends to pack and slows down heat penetration.



## ON UNDERSTANDING THE LANGUAGE (Part II) —of Standards and Federal Inspection

Knowing the language of food-buying is one of the best ways to learn how to shop. If a product bears the mark of federal inspection, on meat products inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, you can read the label and know what to count on for the contents.

A product marked "cabbage rolls with meat" must have at least 12% meat. A "cheesefurter" must contain at least 15% cheese. "Chili Con Carne" must have at least 40% meat -- however, "Chili Con Carne with Beans" means at least 25% meat.

"Deviled Ham" can have no more than 35% fat. "Ham spread" must have at least 50% ham; ham and cheese spread, however, is required to have at least 25% ham (cooked basis).

If you're looking at some of the Chinese dishes -- you can expect "Chop Suey" (American Style) with Macaroni and Meat to have at least 25% meat. "Chow Mein Vegetables with Meat" - at least 12% meat and "Fried Rice with Meat" must contain at least 10% meat. Won Ton Soup has at least 5% meat.

A "Meat Wellington" must have at least 50% cooked tenderloin spread with a liver pate or similar coating and covered with not more than 30% pastry. "Pepper steaks", at least 30% beef (cooked basis) or "Meat Pies" must have at least 25% meat. "Meatballs in Sauce" must contain at least 50% meatballs -- however sauce with meat, or meat sauce, at least 6% meat.

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### COMMENTS AND INQUIRIES TO:

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